

Nomination of National
Symbols of Aruba's... pg 3



Enjoy Aruba's
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Four more swine flu deaths
in Netherlands pg 8

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AHATA supports creation of “independentized” Aruba Tourism Authority



L. - r., Alex Nieuwmeyer, James Hepple and Javier Wolter

ORANJESTAD - In reviewing the outlook for 2011 the President and CEO of the Aruba Hotel and Tourism Association (AHATA) Jim Hepple, confirmed the membership of AHATA was looking forward to the creation of the new ATA, which is scheduled to come into existence in early February. The process by which the new independent ATA would come into being was explained to AHATA's membership at the General Assembly held on December 30th; and this new approach to marketing the island could only be beneficial for Aruba as a whole. The AHATA membership, consisting of the hotels and other stakeholders of the Aruban tourism, endorsed this initiative.

Mr. Hepple expressed “creating a much more efficient, streamlined and agile destination marketing organization was vital if Aruba was to remain competitive in a very challenging marketing environment. This was something AHATA had been advocating for many years which would result in a much more entrepreneurial-like tourism authority.”

“AHATA has been working with the Government for more than a year to arrive at a mutually acceptable agreement to set up an effective joint public/private marketing Board of seven persons, which would work in the best interests of Aruba's tourism sector and Aruba as a whole.

Three members of the Board would be appointed by the Minister of Tourism, three by the Board of AHATA, with the seventh independent director agreed upon by the other six directors and then appointed by the Minister. The Board is in place and consists of Ewald Biemans, Warren Stanley, Jim Hepple (Vice Chairman), Ed Malone, Sanju Luidens, G.F. (Junior) Croes and, as the independent member and current Chairman, Jossy Lacle, former Director of WEB.”

Mr. Hepple stated that the draft legislation which would establish the new ATA, had been extensively discussed with the Minister of Tourism, Transportation and Labor Affairs, and there had been give and take on both sides before arriving at what appears to be an effective set of ordinances to establish the new tourism authority.

The Chairman of AHATA, Mr. Alex Nieuwmeyer, endorsed these sentiments and concurred that the initiative had the strong support of AHATA's Board and membership. It was clear that a fund dedicated almost completely to marketing, independent of central Government finances, was a very effective way to ensure the long term continuity of Aruba's marketing efforts.

Continued on page 3

Bright Bakery is the proud sponsor of Special Olympics



“Let me win; But if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt” is the motto of the International Special Olympics. Aruba's special athletes have been training hard to prepare for the Summer Games in Athens, Greece in June, which will be the world's largest sporting event in 2011.

Mr. Franklin Bareno, owner of Bright Bakery,

proudly announced his sponsorship of Aruba's Special Olympic Committee during a press conference at The Aruban Chef restaurant in Tanki Leendert on Friday, January 14, urging all Arubans to join him in sending a delegation of athletes and coaches to “Go Go for the Gold in Greece 2011!”

Continued on page 5

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TUESDAY AND FRIDAY: LIVE MUSIC

Brazil braces for more rains, mourns 500 dead

OVA FRIBURGO, Brazil (AFP) - Brazilians braced for catastrophic landslides after heavy rains yesterday, after walls of muddy water claimed over 500 lives in was reported to be the country's worst-ever flood disaster.

As rescue teams and residents combed the wreckage of hillside communities near tourist hotspot Rio de Janeiro, forecasters warned the wet weather was likely to last into next week.

"It will keep raining until at least next Wednesday in the Serrana region of Rio de Janeiro. We are predicting a light but steady rain, which is not good because it could lay the conditions for more landslides," warned the head of national weather institute, Luiz Cavalcanti.

He stressed "light but continuous rain is very dangerous" because there is nowhere for it to flow away to and "it accu-



View of a vehicle swept by the water during heavy rains at the village of Vieira, 40 km from Teresopolis and 35 km from Nova Friburgo, state of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. (AFP)

mulates until the earth gives way under its weight and swallows up the hillside."

The bad weather was hampering efforts to reach many small towns and rural areas, cut off after the floods washed away roads and tracks.

An official with Rio's state health service, Colonel Fernando Suarez, told AFP that at least 514 people were killed when torrents of water swept down hillsides in three towns before dawn Wednesday.

An estimated 12,000 people were left homeless.

Forecasters have said the storms dumped the equivalent of a month's rain on the area in just a few hours, and blamed the unusually wet weather on the La Niña phenomenon which has increased rainfall in southeast Brazil.

The G1 news outlet called it "the biggest climatic tragedy in the history of the country," surpassing the 437 people killed in a 1967 mudslide previously considered Brazil's worst disaster.

"The forecast of more rains is not reassuring," said the Rio governor Sergio Cabral, again urging residents to abandon their homes in the disaster zones and move to safer ground.

In the town center, mud had

taken over a square in front of a white church. Bulldozers and plastic-clad workers were clearing the area.

The catastrophe is the first major challenge facing new Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff, sworn into office on January 1.

Haiti political violence flares

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AFP) - Violence flared in the Haitian capital early yesterday, with witnesses reporting gunfire, as a crisis over the country's stalled presidential election deepened.

The protests flared hours after President Rene Preval was handed an official report from international monitors calling on his preferred successor to drop out of the race to replace him.

In the north of the capital Port-au-Prince, the remains of burned tires scorched the tarmac in several streets. Residents said they had been set alight during the night.

Witnesses and Haiti's Radio Metropole spoke of armed gangs and said that shots were fired in a confrontation with police.

By early morning, tensions had largely dissipated in the city, still in ruins after last year's earthquake. "There was trouble and some of them had

guns, but we controlled the situation," a local police officer told AFP.

National police spokesman Gary Desrosiers told Haitian radio stations that police had made a dozen arrests. Radio Metropole reported that firearms had been confiscated.

Desrosiers did not identify who was behind the unrest. However, Port-au-Prince residents questioned by AFP had no doubt that supporters of Preval's would-be successor, Jude Celestin, were to blame.

The trouble erupted the morning after international election experts formally handed over a report calling for Celestin to withdraw from the delayed runoff round in the presidential race, because of alleged vote-rigging.

The experts with the Organization of American States (OAS) discussed their findings with Preval's government yesterday.

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BRISBANE, Australia --A boat washed up by floodwater lies next to the Graceville Sea Scout building in Brisbane. As the waters receded yesterday, Brisbane residents began shovelling mud from homes, footpaths and roads as the city -- Australia's third largest -- struggled to come back to life after it was turned into a briny lake. (AFP PHOTO)



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2011 is the PERFECT year to stop smoking!

Cigarette smoking has become a luxury you can no longer afford.

At the beginning of a new year we often make resolutions of necessary changes we plan to make in our lives. One such resolution is to stop smoking. People would share their resolution to stop smoking with family and friends in the hope that they would support and encourage them in their resolve to quit the habit.

If you are a smoker, 2011 could be the perfect year for you to resolve to stop your smoking habit. To quit smoking is not easy, but you can do it. For some smokers quitting is harder than for others, but the reality is that anyone who sets his mind and resolves to quit the habit can stop smoking. There are countless more people who have quit the habit than there are those who still smoke. Why not make 2011 the year to stop smoking! It should be your most important resolution this year!

Smoking is the most avoidable cause of most of the myriad of diseases and premature deaths in the world today. Cigarette smoke contains a mixture of more than 700 chemicals in the form of gas or particles including nicotine, asphalt, carbon monoxide, ammonia and cyanide. Nicotine is known to be extremely toxic with about 50mg being sufficient to kill an adult.

Cigarette smoke, when inhaled travels to the lungs with its poisonous substances and spreads throughout the rest of the body reaching the brains, the heart and other vital organs within 10 seconds after the very first intake. Smoking has a devastating impact on the smoker, his/her family and on the rest of the country.

Adults who are in the vicinity of a smoker must exercise great caution, because any



smoke they inhale can cause the thickening of their blood, which can precipitate a heart attack. Those around a smoker run the risk of getting lung cancer due to what we call secondary smoke from cigarette smokers.

In the case of children: if a child or a baby is exposed to cigarette smoke they can suffer from bronchitis or lung disease and can also get ear infections. Cigarette smoke is extremely hard on their young, sensitive lungs. This smoke can even cause the death of a young child. Regrettably, there is no so called safe amount of smoke that one can inhale before becoming affected, for even the smallest amount is detrimental to our health.

Should you stop smoking today you will:

- reduce your chances for diseases such as cancer, and cardiovascular diseases
- if you're diabetic it will reduce the chances of complications and worsening of your Diabetes
- improve your blood circulation
- help your body fight against infections
- improve your overall breathing
- you will begin to see immediate positive effects
- help you save money

Smoking can be compared to the addiction to drugs because of the serious and detrimental consequences of cigarette smoking. Though very difficult, it is possible to break the habit of smoking. And, there are various methods to kick the habit. There are those who went "cold turkey" on the habit and were rid of it at once. Others have used chewing gums, book formulas, motivation programs, acupuncture, a plaster on the body somewhere, hypnosis and still others have used medication. Many of these methods have been helpful in getting people to stop smoking.

The most important matter here is to find a method to get you to stop. Consult your doctor and get his advice on what you can do to stop your smoking habit.

Perhaps, you might want to consider hypnosis. Who knows, hypnosis might be the solution for you. Answer the following questions with a yes or no:

This will help determine whether or not you are, indeed, ready to stop smoking:

1. I tried kicking the habit at least once before.

2. I have been considering stopping for the past six months

3. I can imagine perfectly well how my life would be without smoking

4. I've already told my family and friends that I'm going to stop smoking

5. I can think of at least five reasons why I should stop smoking

6. I think I can relax and calm myself easily without smoking if I knew how to relax, and I'm willing to learn how to do this.

7. I realize that for me to be successful I must do things differently when I stop smoking and I know that will be a valuable thing for me to do. I am confident that there will be positive changes in my life when I stop smoking.

8. I am ready to stop lying to myself that cigarette helps me in some way. I know that cigarettes are 100% bad for me.

9. I realize that I will eventually die if I continue smoking, even if I smoke only a few cigarettes a day, they will kill me slowly.

10. I have an open mind for new ideas and I want to use new ideas to help me stop smoking for the rest of my life.

Give yourself 1 point for each yes answer, Call Aruba Hypnosis Center at telephone: 583-9026 for your results.

Nomination of National Symbols of Aruba's Natural Environment

ORANJESTAD -- In conjunction with the 25th year of Status Aparte, it is prudent that we give attention to our flora and fauna, which is also the intention of the government.

The law which is designed to protect our environment offers the possibility for the protection of endangered trees and animals. A proposition to protect all local endangered species which have special value for Aruba is being considered for implementation.

The Office of Environmental Inspection intends to add a festive element to our Status Aparte celebration this year. Everyone is invited to submit an item from our environment for nomination in one of the categories. The item nominated may become the National Symbol in its particular category.

Aruban nature may be considered originating from the "Hof di Aruba," Aruba's Garden, where we have a special place for, among others, fauna, fruit trees, cadushi, grass, birds, reptile, turtles, insects, coral, anemone and animals resembling crabs.

One can also nominate a particular Aruban scene (landscape) as a protected area in the Aruban Garden.

Every item to be nominated must be submitted in digital form, either that of a tree and/or an animal, or landscape, and sent to Hardinidiaruba@gmail.com. The following requirements apply:

The tree or animal must be a local species, must have a Papiamentu name and/or Dutch, or English or Latin name. If you're submitting a digital photo of a landscape, it must be a scene within the territory of Aruba. You must identify the name of the area; the oldest name of the area on a

map should have precedence over any other name.

You must submit a 20 to 50 words on paper expressing why you chose your particular item.

Submit your digital photo: minimum 500kb in JPEG format. All digital photos submitted will become the property of Aruba with all legal rights of ownership to be able to reproduce it, publish it and change any accompanying text.

Every citizen may submit one or more items for nomination. Likewise, every visitor may submit one or more items. The Office of Environmental Inspection nor the Department of Naturalization and Environment (DINA) will not be recruiting nominations from visitors. Aruban visitors may submit their items for nomination in English, Dutch or Papiamentu.

A special commission comprised of either the Office of Environmental Inspection or the DINA will consider each item submitted for nomination and will advise the Minister of Infrastructure and Environment of their recommendation.


AHATA supports creation...

Continued on from page 1


He applauded the fact that the AHATA would now be a much leaner and more efficient organization and the new Board would have the authority to review and approve marketing plans and programs as well as their supporting budgets. He further applauded the Government's clear intention to establish an entity combining public and private expertise working together for best interests of Aruba.

Mr. Javier Wolter, Presi-

dent of CMB Bank and AHATA's Treasurer, also congratulated this joint public/private initiative, which is a first for Aruba and clearly to be in the best long term interest of tourism for the island. He acknowledged that it could take some time for the new ATA to reach its full potential given it would be operating with a completely new set of policies and practices.



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Director FCCA praises Prime Minister Eman for focusing on Aruba's neighborhoods



ORANJESTAD – Recently, before Dutch Minister of the Interior and Kingdom relations, Mr. Jan Pieter Donner, started his tour together with Prime Minister Mike Eman and Minister of Integration, Infrastructure and Environment

Oslin (Benny) Sevinger in the different neighborhoods of Aruba, FCCA Director van Poppel gave a briefing on the management of those neighborhoods to the delegation. FCCA provides low-income housing for islanders. Last year, in May, PM Eman asked Mr. van Poppel why the FCCA does not use bright colors when painting the community houses and why the community residents are not involved in organized social activities.

“For us the message was loud and clear and we started working to remedy the situation immediately,” responded van Poppel. FCCA chose to begin the neighborhood beautification process with the FCCA development in Madiki. Neighborhood youth were encouraged to get involved and participate with the painting of

the houses and they responded enthusiastically.

PM Eman said he is very satisfied with the outcome and requested FCCA to make a project file on how to improve the conditions of the 21 FCCA neighborhoods on Aruba. This project file is already approved by FDA, the Aruba Development Fund.

The proposal details the improvement and adaptation of infrastructures in all the 21 FCCA community neighborhoods with the focus on social activities and recreation to upgrade the quality of life for each community; safety is also a top priority.

Mr. van Poppel demonstrated great pride when briefing the ministers and delegation present on the plans to improve the life of all the community residents.

Political parties meet to evaluate Social dialogue



ORANJESTAD - On Thursday, January 13, government officials, union leaders and various NGO's met to evaluate and analyze the National Social Dialogue of 2010 in order to decide how to proceed with Social Dialogue #2. This time, the dialogue will examine and discuss Education and Safety issues. A committee comprising a representative of each association will then be formed to select and implement the most important points that

were discussed.

During the previous dialog, important issues regarding Education and Safety were presented, but it was felt that there were still some points missing. The committee must now meet so to define those points and to deliver a concept or plan on Education and Safety to all parties involved with these issues by next week.

If all goes according to schedule, it is planned for Social Dialogue # 2 to take place

in February 2011, with education as the priority.

Government officials expressed their satisfaction regarding how the meetings have been conducted and for the support they received from the different unions and associations, not only for their presence, but also for their valuable contributions. This helps the government when tackling problem and seeking solutions more effectively.



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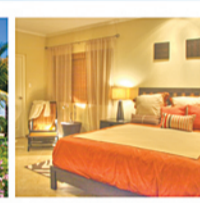
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Bright Bakery is the proud sponsor of Special Olympics

Continued from page 1



Bright Bakery sleeve art

The committee is attempting to raise the funds needed to send 18 athletes and their coaches to Athens for the Summer Games from June 25 to July 4. 7,500 Special Olympics Athletes from 185 nations will compete in 22 Olympic-type sports.

Mr. Bareno is demonstrating his national pride of Aruba's gold, silver and bronze medal winners with pictures of them on all his packaging of Kipashi, Pan Bruin and Rolls. All the information for donating to help support their fundraising efforts is on each package and Franklin encourages every islander to give generously.

One way to contribute is to purchase Bright Bakery products, as Mr. Bareno will donate a percentage of all sales of the special packaged breads during the duration of Carnival season 57. There will be a brief hiatus during March, which he dedicates to assisting a local school program, and then the sponsored Special Olympics bags will again be on the shelves until June.

Wanda Broeksema of Digicel mobile services also announced the continued their company's continued sponsorship of Aruba delegation to the World Summer Games. Digicel will be arranging a special

SMS number enabling subscribers to donate to their travel fund by sending a text message costing 1 Aruban florins, (\$.57 U.S.); 100% of which will be donated to the Aruba Special Olympic Committee.

Aruba's special athletes have participated in 3 International Summer Games prior to this year, and came home from Shanghai in 2007 with 5 gold, 4 silver and 14 bronze medals in swimming, badminton, table tennis, bowling, bocci ball and track and field. This year's delegation will again participate in these six sport disciplines. Jesse Beukenboom, director of



Franklin Bareno, Arturo Werleman, Netty Williams, head of Volunteers and Wanda Broeksema of Digical

IDEFRE, Aruba's national sports organization, announced that during the annual presentations recognizing outstanding athletic achievement, Simplemente Deporte, a category has been established to acknowledge Aruba's special athletes. The award ceremony will take place in the Westin Ballroom on February 11.

Greece, the nation where all Olympic Games originated, is especially proud to host this year's Summer Games, the first to take place since the death of the founder of the Special Olympics, Ethel

Kennedy, two years ago. Organizers of the Special Olympics declare that all participants are winners:

"Winners in their struggle for our respect in their diversity.

Winners in their struggle for self-esteem.

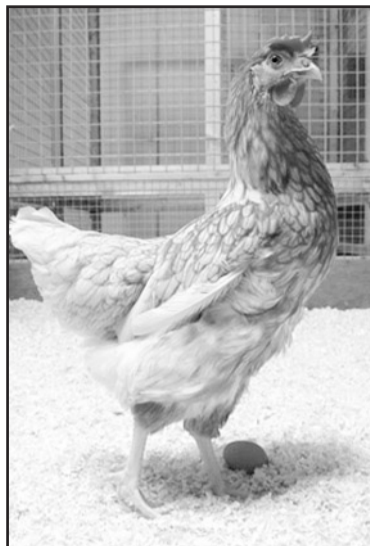
Winners in their struggle to defend their special abilities."

Donations can be made to Aruba's Special Olympics Committee through their account at RBTT Bank, 4056892.

by Rosalie Klein

Sci-Tech

Scientists make chickens that don't spread bird flu



WASHINGTON (AFP) - European scientists have found a way to genetically modify chickens so that they don't transmit bird flu, according to research published Thursday in the journal Science.

Bird flu, also known as H5N1 avian influenza, usually afflicts poultry but can cross over to humans and cause lethal respiratory problems and other complications.

The first cases detected in humans were in Hong Kong in 1997. A wider global outbreak took hold in 2004 and cases have flared across parts of the world ever since.

Scientists from the Universities of Cambridge and Edinburgh said the modified chickens could get bird flu but could not pass it on to other chickens.

"Chickens are potential bridging hosts that can enable new strains of flu to be transmitted to humans," said Laurence Tiley, of the University of Cambridge's Department of Veterinary Medicine.

"Preventing virus transmission in chickens should reduce the economic impact of the disease and reduce the

risk posed to people exposed to the infected birds."

However, Tiley noted that the research still in its early stages, and the birds they developed are not intended to be eaten by people.

"The genetic modification we describe is a significant first step along the path to developing chickens that are completely resistant to avian flu," Tiley said.

"These particular birds are only intended for research purposes, not for consumption."

The birds were altered by a new gene that makes a "decoy" molecule that imitates an element of bird flu virus.

Then the virus is "tricked into recognizing the decoy molecule instead of the viral genome and this interferes with the replication cycle of the virus," the study said.

When scientists infected the genetically modified chickens with avian influenza, the birds fell ill but did not spread the flu to other birds, whether those birds were genetically modified or not.

"The results achieved in this study are very encouraging," said researcher Helen Sang of the University of Edinburgh.

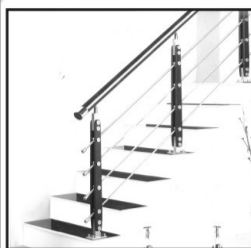
"Using genetic modification to introduce genetic changes that cannot be achieved by animal breeding demonstrates the potential of GM to improve animal welfare in the poultry industry," she said.

"This work could also form the basis for improving economic and food security in many regions of the world where bird flu is a significant problem."



Nissan Motors' X-Trail Fuel Cell Vehicle, seen here in 2006. Toyota, Honda and Nissan, along with 10 Japanese energy groups including natural gas refiners and distributors, want to build 100 hydrogen filling stations by 2015 in Tokyo, Nagoya, Osaka and Fukuoka.

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Scientists find 'oldest ever' winery in Armenia



WASHINGTON (AFP) - Archaeologists said Tuesday they had found the world's oldest known winery in a cave in Armenia, indicating that humans were distilling grapes during the Copper Age, more than 6,000 years ago.

"This is, so far, the oldest relatively complete wine production facility, with its press, fermentation vats and storage jars in situ," said Hans Barnard, the lead author of an article about the study published Tuesday in the peer-reviewed Journal of Archaeological Science.

The artifacts were discovered by Armenian, US and Irish archaeologists inside a cave complex in southern Armenia, near the border with Iran and close to a village that still makes its own wine, researchers said.

They were found on the same site where archaeologists had in June 2010 discovered a perfectly preserved leather moccasin dating back 5,500 years, considered to be the world's oldest shoe.

Radiocarbon analysis by researchers at University of

California Irvine and Oxford University has dated the installation to between 4100 BC and 4000 BC, or the Late Chalcolithic Period, also known as the Copper Age.

The findings included a rudimentary wine press and a clay vat surrounded by grape seeds, withered grape vines, and remains of pressed grapes, as well as potsherds and even a cup and drinking bowl.

"For the first time, we have a complete archaeological picture of wine production dating back 6,100 years," said Gregory Areshian, co-director of the excavation and assistant director of the University of California Los Angeles's Cotsen Institute of Archaeology.

Analysis of the residue found on the vat by Areshian, Barnard and other UCLA archaeologists confirmed the presence of a plant pigment only found in grapes and pomegranates.

"Because no remnants of pomegranates were found in the excavated area, we're confident that the vessels held something made with

grape juice," Areshian said.

He added that the vat -- a shallow, metre (three-foot) square basin surrounded by a thick rim -- resembles wine presses in use as recently as the 19th century throughout the Mediterranean and the Caucasus.

Until now, the earliest known wine press dated back to just 1650 BC, and was excavated in what is now the Israeli-occupied West Bank in 1963, the archaeologists said.

The identity of the ancient Armenian wine-makers remains a mystery, but the scientists said they believed the press was used by predecessors of the Kura-Axes people, an early Transcaucasian group.

They added that the wine was likely used for ceremonial purposes since the press and wine jugs were found near grave sites, although wine for day-to-day consumption may have been made in other locations yet to be unearthed.

"This wine wasn't used to unwind at the end of the day," Areshian said.

Health & Living

US issues new painkiller warning

WASHINGTON (AFP) – The US Food and Drug Administration said that prescription drugs containing acetaminophen, the active ingredient in Tylenol, must update their labels to warn of possible liver damage.

The FDA also asked drug makers to limit the amount in any single dose to 325 milligrams, in order to reduce the risk of liver damage.

The changes do not apply to over-the-counter medications, but to combination prescription painkillers such as Percocet, Vicodin and Tylenol with Codeine.

"FDA is taking this action to make prescription combination pain medications containing acetaminophen safer for patients to use," said Sandra Kweder, deputy director of the Office of New Drugs in FDA's Center for Drug Evaluation and Research.

"Overdose from prescription combination products containing acetaminophen account for nearly half of all cases of acetaminophen-related liver failure in the United States; many of which result in liver transplant or



death."

People who combine various different prescription drugs are at the most risk of liver damage, the FDA said.

"There is no immediate danger to patients who take these combination pain medications and they should continue to take them as directed by their health care provider," said Kweder.

"The risk of liver injury primarily occurs when patients take multiple products containing acetaminophen at one time and exceed the current maximum dose of 4,000 milligrams within a 24-hour period."

The change in dose to a maximum of 325 milligrams

should be phased in over a three-year period, the FDA said.

"The FDA believes that prescription combination products containing no more than 325 mg of acetaminophen per tablet are effective for treating pain."

Warning boxes, the agency's strongest form of warning, should be added to all prescription drugs containing acetaminophen, the FDA said, noting that damage can occur in a short timeframe.

The agency also warned against drinking alcohol in combination with acetaminophen, which has long been known to cause liver damage.

"Most of the cases of severe liver injury occurred in patients who took more than the prescribed dose of an acetaminophen-containing product in a 24-hour period, took more than one acetaminophen-containing product at the same time, or drank alcohol while taking acetaminophen products," it said.

An advisory panel first recommended that FDA make the label changes at a meeting in June 2009.

US warns of liver damage with heart drug



WASHINGTON (AFP) – A heart drug by French pharmaceutical giant Sanofi-

Aventis has been linked to liver damage in some patients, two of whom had to receive transplants, the US Food and Drug Administration said. Dronedaron, marketed as Multaq, was approved in 2009 and has been prescribed at least 492,000 times to people in the United States for treat-

ing abnormal heart rhythm.

The FDA issued its warning to the public and to health professionals, saying labels to the medication would be changed to advise of possible liver dangers.

People taking the drug should call their doctor if they experience symptoms such as itching, yellow eyes or skin, dark urine, loss of appetite, or light-colored stools, the FDA said.

Two elderly women were found to have severe liver failure four and a half and six months after they began taking the drug, the FDA said.

Both had to have their livers removed and doctors could find no other reason why they would have sustained that degree of damage, the FDA said.

The drug is already not supposed to be given to patients who have severe heart failure or have recently been hospitalized for heart failure, the FDA said.

"In a study of patients with these conditions, patients given dronedaron had a greater than two-fold increase in risk of death," the FDA said.



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Breastfeeding study raises doubts over guidelines

LONDON, England (AFP) – Breastfeeding exclusively for the first six months is not necessarily best for a baby's health, British researchers said calling into question advice given to new mothers.

The team led by a paediatrician from University College London said babies fed only breast milk could suffer iron deficiency and may be more prone to allergies.

The study says babies could start to be weaned on to solids as early as four months, although other experts advised sticking to the existing guidelines.

Ten years ago, the World Health Organisation (WHO) recommended that infants should be exclusively breastfed for six months.

Many Western countries, including

65 percent of European member states and the United States, elected not to follow this recommendation fully, or at all," the authors said, although Britain did.

The WHO recommendation "rested largely" on a review of 16 studies, including seven from developing countries.

It concluded that babies given only breast milk for six months had fewer infections and experienced no growth problems.

But another review of 33 studies found "no compelling evidence" not to introduce solids at four to six months, the experts said.

Some studies have also shown that breastfeeding for six months fails to give babies all the nutrition they need.

One US study from 2007 found that babies exclusively breastfed for six months were more likely to develop anaemia than those introduced to solids at four to six months.

On the issue of allergies, the British study said researchers in Sweden found that the incidence of early onset coeliac disease increased after

a recommendation to delay introduction of gluten until age six months, "and it fell to previous levels after the recommendation reverted to four months".

The authors said however that exclusively breastfeeding for six months remains the best recommendation for developing countries, which have higher death rates from infection.

But in developed countries, it could lead to adverse health outcomes and may "reduce the window for introducing new



tastes".

"Bitter tastes, in particular, may be important in the later acceptance of green leafy vegetables, which may potentially affect later food preferences with influence on health outcomes such as obesity."

The researchers said the European Food Safety Authority's panel on dietetic products, nutrition and allergies has concluded that for infants across the EU, complementary foods may be introduced safely between four to six months.

Experts in Britain challenged the findings of the new study.

Janet Fyle, professional policy adviser at the Royal College of Midwives, said: "I really must challenge the suggestion from the review that the UK should reconsider its current advice on exclusive breastfeeding for six months."

"I believe that this is a retrograde step and plays into the hands of the baby food industry which has failed to support the six-month exclusive breastfeeding policy in the UK."

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Steak on a Stone - Le Petit Café's specialty



Welcome to Le Petit Café

In a time when dining choices and critiques are based on value for your dollar, an old favorite, Le Petit Café, still offers one of the best values not only in price, but quality, quantity and ambiance.

Le Petit Café in Palm Beach offers charming surroundings reminiscent of a European outdoor café. Surrounded by Old World gaslights and an abundance of flora, it provides a delightful and romantic setting.

The Early Bird special offers a choice of a full sized chicken breast, a hefty portion

tremely moist and tasty. A thick cut of filet mignon usually requires cutting into smaller sections to cook fully, especially if your preference is medium-well to well done.

Le Petit Café is particularly well known for its "Land and Sea" specialty, filet mignon and lobster tail; a gourmet treat when served in

their signature fashion. The restaurant also offers a diverse menu of pastas and tempting gourmet appetizers such as seafood crepes, crispy calamari, and escargot. For family members in the mood for something different there are several dishes to choose from, such as chicken parmesan, so a large family with different ideas of what they want for dinner can easily be accommodated.

We all know that breakfast is the most important meal of the day, and Le Petit Café has also long been famous for the best value for breakfast on



Fish on a Stone

of filet mignon or fresh grouper fillet accompanied by a well-stuffed baked potato, rice or french fries. There is a choice of soup or salad as a starter, and ice cream for dessert, all for a modest \$21.50; an unbeatable price for a great meal on Aruba!

Cooking your main course on the stone is a supremely healthy method of preparation, seasoned to perfection and using no fats or oils. Fish in particular is excellent; ex-

Aruba. They still offer an American breakfast for \$6.95 and a full breakfast buffet for \$10.95, another unbeatable value!

Le Petit Café is also located in the Paradise Beach Villas, so whether you are staying in Oranjestad, Palm Beach or Eagle Beach, a La Petit Café restaurant can be found only a short stroll away from you resort, a perfect way to begin or end your day!

Supermarket magnate Albert Heijn dies at 83



PUDLESTON, England -- Dutch supermarket magnate Albert Heijn has died at the age of 83. Albert Heijn was the grandson of the founder of a chain of supermarkets of the same name.

He was former chairman of the board of executives for the Ahold concern, which owns the Dutch supermarket chain. His brother Gerrit Jan

Heijn was murdered in a kidnapping in 1987.

In the Netherlands, Albert Heijn is a household name and synonymous with supermarket. The first grocery shop, which was opened by the family in Zaandam in 1887, is a museum and can still be visited today. The Ahold concern has grown into an international super-

market operator.

Mr Heijn died at his home in the English town of Puddleston in the county of Hereford, he suffered from post-polio syndrome (PPS).

Albert Heijn had been decorated by Queen Beatrix for his services to the country.

Flooding cuts off Dutch towns



MAASTRICHT, The Netherlands -- Flooding is threatening to cut off the towns of Itteren and Borgharen (near Maastricht) from the outside world. Residents have been advised to leave their cars in car parks outside the towns. Four army vehicles are ferrying people to and from the towns.

Water levels had been falling after the highest levels were reached last weekend. But persistent rain and melt

water from the Belgium Ardennes mean levels in the Maas River could rise to 47.15 meters above the Dutch NAP standard (roughly sea level). Water levels are rising very quickly.

The two towns were also cut off last weekend, but so far residents have not been evacuated.

Meanwhile water levels in the river Roer between Roermond and Vlodrop rose more

quickly than expected on Thursday evening because of rain in neighbouring Germany's Ruhr Area. Fifty households have been given sandbags and told to move what they can to higher floors. The heavy rain has filled water catchment areas and the river is flowing very fast. Water levels in the Roer are predicted to climb higher than last weekend.

Four more swine flu deaths in the Netherlands

AMSTERDAM -- Another four people have died of AH1N1 influenza in the Netherlands. The National Institute of Public Health and the Environment RIVM says a total of 148 people have been hospitalised with the disease, which is also known as swine flu or Mexican flu.

Two of the four victims were already ill. The RIVM did not disclose their age, gender or location.

Last week it was announced that three people had died of AH1N1 since late October,

two of them young children.

An RIVM spokesman explained that "people under the age of 20 are more susceptible

to AH1N1. Older people have often had previous bouts of flu and have developed anti-bodies to combat the virus."



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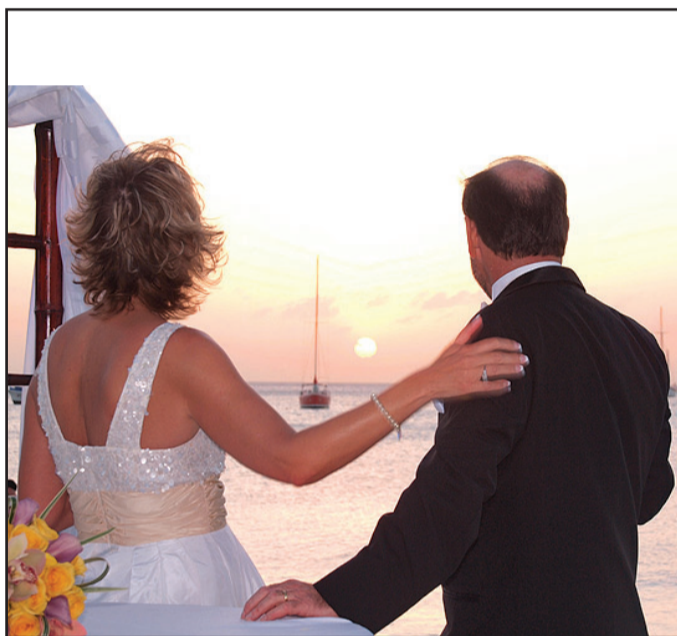
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True love has stood the test of time for John and Maureen



It may have taken twenty years for John Hartley and Maureen Byrnes to finally tie the knot, but the vows taken at sunset on the beach in front of the Radisson Aruba Resort, Casino & Spa on Thursday evening, January 13, could not have been more heartfelt. Tears and laughter marked their exchange of

health issues for both of them that make one examine what is important in life prompted to John to pop the question. "Though we had discussed marriage on and off through the years, it was never an imperative for either of us, but then one day I bought a ring, and friends said stop dilly-dallying and ask, already.

vows and cheers from observers on the beach accompanied their passionate kiss as Reverend Bob Gibson encouraged John "to lay a good one your beautiful bride, the way we do it here on the islands."

John and Maureen had dated for two years before setting up house together 18 years ago;

rings and meant as much to her as it did to me."

Over the years, the couple had visited Aruba four times while bouncing around the Caribbean; it was always a favorite destination. "Even though we had just been here a year ago, the only place we felt right for our wedding was Aruba, it completely embodies Paradise for us," John explained.

Their union was obviously blessed, as an entire morning of stormy skies cleared up to offer a picture perfect sunset for the ceremony. They may have thought it would be a quiet event just for the two of them, but they had an encouraging audience of dozens on the beach, who only added to the joyous moment.

Aruba was always a popular destination for the Manorville, Long Island couple over the last two decades, but now has particular significance and could be a very special place to celebrate their anniversary each year. Staff of THE MORNING NEWS offers John and Maureen their warmest congratulations and wishes for many years of happiness together.

"Voz y Landia" revived!



ORANJESTAD – Many islanders can still remember the popular youth song festival called Voz y Landia. The final was always held in one of the hotels, drawing large audiences who came to appreciate our young island talents. Featuring original compositions, lyrics, music, and new voices, the festival was a delight for everyone.

Voz y Landia was originally organized by school teachers such as Eddie Marchena, Maybelline Arends-Croes, and the Rincones family; all of them volunteers who donated their time tirelessly to make the festival a resounding success year after year.

In celebration of the 25th year of our Autonomous State (Status Aparte), retired school teacher Gemmy de Freitas and renowned island musician Robert Maduro have joined together to revive the "Voz y Landia" Festival. They are convinced this will contribute immensely to the musical formation of our youth. They are putting out a call for more teachers to join them in their goal to revive this major musical event, which will stimulate island youngsters toward maintaining cultural traditions.

The first "Voz y Landia -2" festival is planned for October, 2011

COMICS

PICKLES



MOMMA



CALVIN and HOBBS



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• THE EYES HAVE IT •

ACROSS

1. Shackles
6. silk; 2 wds.
12. Red fruit
17. Overcast
18. It's about time!; 2 wds.
19. Place of beauty
20. Closet item
21. "Angel"
- (Wolfe); 2 wds.
23. Addition word
24. Autumn air ingredient
26. Before, to Hardy
27. Hawaiian tree
28. Made of: suffix
29. Chilled
31. Sleeve
33. Played a part
35. Growl
36. Summer TV fare
38. Still
40. Give support
41. Chum
42. Companion of Blynken

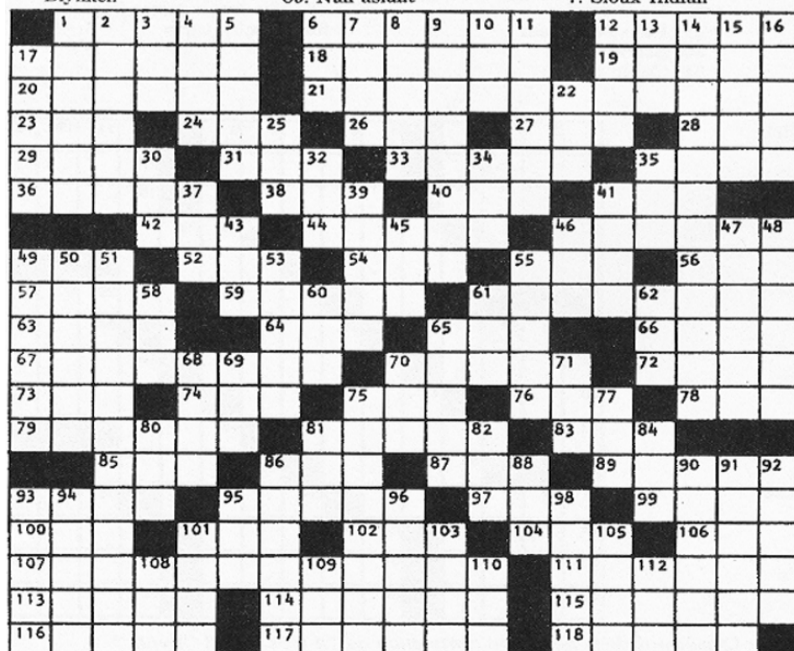
44. Under oath
46. "... long wont ..."; 2 wds.
49. Little guy, slang-style
52. Actor Young
54. Wrath
55. Take in
56. Eggs
57. "Beowulf," for one
59. Flat on one's face
61. Shared
63. Shelter
64. Mimic
65. Make dentelle
66. Landress's enemy
67. Lees
70. Caesar's fateful month
72. Otherwise on Iona
73. Playing marble
74. Sculpture, e.g.
75. Drain
76. ..., skip, and a jump
78. Set
79. Division in a poem
81. Harden
83. Constrictor
85. Nail aslant

86. Compete
87. Angler's must
89. Lam out to marry
93. Nutmeg spice
95. Pithy parts
97. Fixation
99. Machine gun
100. Alas in Bonn
101. Yes, to Nanette
102. Roast or tickler
104. Fraternal order member
106. Profit
107. Addison series; 2 wds.
111. Kind of valve
113. Concise
114. Locomotive
115. More like a pin
116. German industrial city
117. Pool members, for short
118. "Boss" ...

DOWN

1. Brief look
2. Over there
3. Lode cavity
4. Everyone's ancestral home
5. Aram, today
6. Baseball's Bando
7. Sioux Indian

8. Plant life
9. Watch out; 2 wds.
10. "... Wednesday" (Eliot)
11. Fed the fire
12. On a liner
13. Scrape with a hoof
14. Ordinary, to the eye; 2 wds.
15. Ms. Doone
16. Double-
17. Preside over
22. TV's "Squad"
25. Nose
30. Dull hue
32. Michel's my
34. Tole metal
35. Needlefish
37. Holiday drink
39. Wrap around
41. Paris's "Neuf"
43. Brief swim
45. Native mineral
46. Craggy hill
47. Disinclined
48. Yule stocking spot
49. ... of burden
50. Optimistic
51. Roger Tory Peterson et al.; 2 wds.
53. Bestow
55. Before phrase or 22
58. 102
60. Choose
61. Golfer's goal
62. Humorist George
65. Narrow slowly
68. Labyrinth
69. Tudor or Modern
70. Ms. West
71. Quoits peg
75. Third-class accommodations
77. Edgar Allan
80. Bible patriarch in Matthew
81. Gawain or Bedivere
82. Sodom emigre
84. Churchly garment
86. "Other ... Other Rooms"
88. Gambling-game item
90. Baroque
91. Sneaked a look
92. "... Laughing"
93. Dull finish
94. They go with pains
95. Poolroom item
96. Kind of protest: hyph.
98. Mayor Eastwood
101. Book or season
103. Singer Sonny
105. Was acquainted with
108. Vane letters
109. Booming letters
110. Legal matter
112. Inventor's monogram



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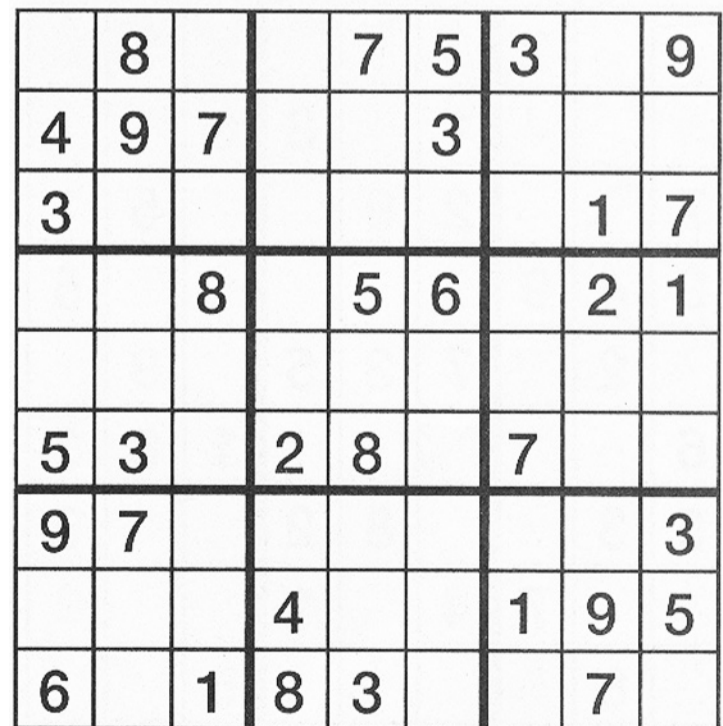
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Sudoku



SOLUTION

2	1	7	6	8	1	9	9	9
9	6	1	2	9	7	8	2	8
8	8	9	2	1	9	7	2	6
7	9	2	1	8	2	6	8	9
8	8	9	7	6	2	9	1	2
1	2	6	9	9	8	8	7	2
2	1	2	8	7	6	9	9	8
9	9	8	8	2	1	2	6	7
6	7	8	9	2	9	2	8	1

Complete the grid so that every row and every column contains the numbers 1 through 9
A number is Never repeated in a row or column.
In addition every rectangle must contain the numbers 1 through 9

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Finance

Lehman Brothers expects to pay creditors more cash

NEW YORK (AFP) – Failed US investment bank Lehman Brothers said it plans to pay its creditors 60.1 billion dollars, more than first estimated but still six times less than the total amount owed.

Lawyers at restructuring firm Alvarez & Marsal LLC, which manages Lehman's assets, said the firm would have a good opportunity to sell assets over the next 12 months, especially in strategic real estate, allowing it to gain more than the 57.5 billion dollars it had previously estimated.

Lehman's liquidators expect the courts to allow creditors to seek 322 billion dollars out of their claims for 369 billion dollars.

Alvarez & Marsal expects that final approval for

Lehman's reorganization plan will take longer than expected.

The plan is due to be registered within seven to 10 days but the law firm says US authorities will likely not green-light it until the third quarter.

A hearing is due to take place by June and the reorganization plan could be approved within two to three months from that time, a source close to the matter told AFP.

Lehman will not be able to reimburse creditors until the plan has been approved.

New York-based Lehman was one of the leading international banks before it was forced to declare bankruptcy in September 2008 due to an acute lack of cash as the global financial crisis erupted, leading to a meltdown in the US economy.

Gold could hit record highs above \$1,600: GFMS

LONDON, England (AFP) – Gold could hit record highs above \$1,600 per ounce later this year, driven by low interest rates and stubborn concerns over the eurozone debt crisis, metals consultancy GFMS forecast.

"GFMS are expecting that towards the summer prices could start to move materially higher, with gold possibly breaking through \$1,500 (per ounce) at that stage," GFMS said in its latest report.

"They also see an approach to or even a breach of \$1,600 by late 2011/early 2012 as quite feasible. "Much of this is expected to be driven by still low interest rates, poor returns

elsewhere (and) the elevated level of government debts in Europe, the United States and Japan," the report said.

The consultancy added that gold was also lifted by "nagging concerns over quantitative easing in the United States and its ramifications for the dollar."

The US Federal Reserve has been creating new money to pump into the US economy to bolster a hesitant recovery but in doing so, it risks debasing the value of the dollar.

Gold hit a record 1,431.25 dollars on December 7, boosted by its safe-haven status in times of economic uncertainty as investors fretted over the eurozone debt crisis.

"GFMS' report highlights the critical role that investment demand played last year in bringing about a series of record price highs and the 26-percent jump in the annual average," the consultancy added.

The metal is also regarded by investors as a safe store of value amid fears over rising inflation.

In late last week trade on the London Bullion Market, gold rose to \$1,381.35 an ounce from \$1,378.75 this week.

EU has Azerbaijan 'support' for gas pipeline project

BAKU, Azerbaijan (AFP) – European Commission chief Jose Manuel Barroso, visiting Azerbaijan to secure gas supplies for the EU, said that Baku has expressed support for an ambitious European pipeline project.

The proposed Nabucco pipeline between Turkey and Austria is an important part of the EU's Southern Gas Corridor project to bring Caspian Sea and Middle Eastern gas to Europe, reducing its dependence on Russian energy.

"From a political perspective, it's clear that the European Commission supports Nabucco and from discussions with the President of Azerbaijan, I understood that Azerbaijan also supports the project," Barroso said at a press conference in Baku.

Doubts had been raised about the future of the multi-billion-dollar Nabucco project because it has not so far secured enough supplies of gas to make it viable, so backing from energy-rich Azerbaijan represents a significant boost.

Barroso signed what he described as a "breakthrough" agreement with Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev which commits the ex-Soviet state to



Nabucco Pipeline was established on June 24 2004 and is based in Vienna The pipeline length is approx. 3,300 km, starting at the Georgian/Turkish and/or Iranian/Turkish border respectively, leading to Baumgarten in Austria.

providing substantial long-term gas supplies to EU countries.

Barroso said it was an important step towards creating the Southern Gas Corridor, which envisages the construction of several pipelines including Nabucco.

The EU sees the Southern Gas Corridor project as vital to future energy security after disputes that disrupted supplies of Russian gas to some European countries.

The declaration stated that Azerbaijan will be a "substantial contributor" to the Southern Gas Corridor but did not specify the volume of gas that would be provided, when supplies might begin, or whether

they would be destined for the Nabucco pipeline.

Azerbaijan's large energy resources are coveted by its neighbours Russia and Iran as well as by the West.

Baku agreed in September to increase gas exports to Russia to two billion cubic metres this year and increase them further from 2012. Baku also agreed a five-year deal with Tehran to supply the Islamic republic with a minimum of one billion cubic metres of gas each year.

Barroso is expected to travel to Turkmenistan, which also has large gas reserves and is another potential source for the proposed new fuel transit route to Europe.

Euro leaps to one-month dollar high



LONDON (AFP) – The European single currency forged a one-month peak, as this week's successful bond auctions in Italy, Spain and Portugal soothed concerns over the eurozone debt crisis, dealers said.

In early morning deals, the euro jumped to \$1.3457 -- which was the highest level since December 14. It later stood at \$1.3368 from \$1.3358 in New York late.

"The US dollar dropped sharply against the euro on the heels of strong sovereign debt auctions and rhetoric from the European Central Bank," said analyst David Rodriguez at

trading site DailyFX.

"A lull in market jitters over the stability of the eurozone suggests that the euro could continue to retrace losses against the safe-haven US dollar." "Following the successful Portuguese bond auction on , Spain and Italy managed to achieve similar results," said PVM analyst Tamas Varga in London. "The two countries raised 9.0 billion euros in the latest round of bond offerings.

As a result the euro strengthened against the dollar."

After the central bank announced it would keep its main interest rate at a record low of one percent for a 20th straight month, comments from ECB President Jean-Claude Trichet on inflation "It is absolutely crystal clear that we will always do what is necessary to deliver price stability." "We are never pre-committed not to move interest rates," he added.

YESTERDAY'S Crossword Answer

S	L	U	G	M	A	L	E	S	C	L	A	M
T	O	R	E	A	W	A	R	E	H	O	S	E
E	O	G	E	R	A	N	G	E	O	V	E	N
A	G	E	B	I	R	D	T	H	R	E	A	D
D	E	S	C	E	N	D	S	H	O	E		
				A	L	A	S	C	I	S	S	O
S	P	L	I	T	S	C	E	N	T	P	I	T
L	O	O	N	S	L	A	N	G	P	A	S	O
A	L	L	S	P	A	R	E	J	U	L	E	P
P	O	L	E	C	A	T	S	P	E	N		
				D	A	N	E	M	A	S	S	A
S	H	R	I	N	K	N	E	S	T	B	A	R
H	O	O	T	I	D	E	A	S	N	O	V	A
A	L	S	O	N	O	O	N	E	E	V	E	S
D	E	E	R	G	E	N	T	S	T	E	L	E

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The Queen's offers an authentic taste of Aruba!



Varella, Luisa and the next generation of chef



Grandma's stoba with classic rice and beans and homemade potato beet salad

One of the distinctions of Aruban cuisine is incorporating unique indigenous ingredients such as in Wild Cucumber Stew and a particular light fish chowder accompanied by the local specialties pan bati (corn meal pancake) and funchi (the local version of polenta.) Thus, eating out at the authentically Aruban restaurant, The Queen's, is very affordable, with a true taste of regional cuisine.

Owner Varella Innocencia confesses she opened her restaurant in Oranjestad because "I grew up with this, and loved serving people our island food. My father and mother operated the little restaurant across from the Americana, which some may remember, the original Arawak. I remember how much our customers loved trying the local food, and they especially loved the prices!"

Varella's mom, Luisa, is still in the kitchen, conjuring up the delicious dishes that have been in her family for generations, which is acknowledged on the menu with "Carni Stoba di Mamachi"- "Grandma's Beef Stew," and their Arawak Steak.

We also bumped into island visitors Jim and Callie from Michigan, who were eager to try island food, and were more than pleased with their venture

into local cuisine. "We will definitely return to The Queen's," they affirmed, "the food was delicious and the prices are more than right."

The menu sports a variety of steaks and tenderloin, fresh caught seafood, Caribbean lobster, and of course, one of our favorites, and what we consider a true test of local cuisine, "Keshi Yena"- "Filled Cheese." This is a tasty, filling stew of chicken, with other ingredients that are handy that day, all incased in a thick skin of melted Gouda. It was very satisfying and particularly memorable paired with The Queen's garlic bread and very special Pica, a mix of chopped onions and the famous local hot pepper, Madame Janette. Not overly spicy, it lent that perfect bit of tang to this deliciously picturesque meal.

Located next to the Harbor at the end of the Weststraat, The Queen's is open from 11:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m., daily, offering indoor and outdoor dining. They also have daily specials, aside from an extensive menu; made from whatever is in season.

We noticed a steady stream of islanders coming for lunch in the pleasant surroundings or picking up take-out containers; always a sure sign of a winner is where the locals like to eat!

Sunday: NFL tail-gate BBQ from 10:30 a.m. Buster's Garage in South Beach Center: One place for the whole family

Buster's Garage, a New York City landmark, made its way to Aruba about a year ago, and found a new home at the South Beach Center across from the Radisson Resort. Dedicated to the sports fanatic, the spacious but homey interior is the perfect place to keep up with your favorite team and have a great meal.

Fun for all the family, Buster's has typical sport bar fare such as chicken wings, quesadillas, calamari rings for munching while watching the main event on 24 giant plasma screens. Every seat is good seat for catching all the action. Open from noon for lunch or dinner, it has plenty of distractions for the younger crowd, including foosball, and a video arcade, so Mom and Dad can relax and enjoy their meal.

The moderately priced menu includes all your favorite finger foods and a great selection of local and imported beers. Customer reviews gave Buster's Garage 4.5 stars out of 5 on yellow-pages-aruba.com; one declared "my wife and I happened to stumble upon it -but what a find!" Another stated "Owner Rusty is so down to earth. The food was very good and the prices were outstanding for the High-Rise area. Aruba needed a place like this."

Buster's regularly organizes special events with live music. At 10 p.m. it turns into a cozy adult hangout; 18 years and over only allowed, with a DJ on duty nightly and boasting the only beerpong table on Aruba. Aside from a great place to root for the home team or your favorites during playoffs and championships, they regularly carry



all UFC fights & WWE events.

Buster's is a great place where island visitors and res-

idents mix and mingle; Monday to Thursday they close at 2:00 a.m., weekends at 4:00 a.m.

Fox shoots man

MOSCOW, Russia – A wounded fox shot its would be killer in Belarus by pulling the trigger on the hunter's gun as the pair scuffled after the man tried to finish the animal off with the butt of the rifle, media said.

The unnamed hunter, who had approached the fox after wounding it from a distance, was in hospital with a leg wound, while the fox made its escape, media said, citing prosecutors from the Grodno region.

"The animal fiercely resisted and in the struggle accidentally pulled the trigger with its paw," one prosecutor was quoted as saying.

Fox-hunting is popular in the picturesque farming region of northwestern Belarus which borders Poland.



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Georgian women offered 'rent-a-husband' service



TBILISI, Georgia (AFP) — A new business in Georgia is offering single women who need household help the chance to hire 'husbands' by the hour -- but the company's owner admits that all that some of his customers need is love.

"Our service is here to assist those women who need help with tough housekeep-

ing tasks, such as for example minor repair works," company owner Beso Mchedlishvili told AFP.

But he said that many women had been confused by the company's name -- A Husband for an Hour Limited -- and had been asking for something more.

Since going into business in the ex-Soviet republic two months ago, the number of calls from women seeking a more intimate hour has significantly exceeded the orders for the company's actual services.

"So we have to explain to them that our guys are not maleprostitutes," Mchedlishvili said.

"They can help with repairing a leaking tap, but their job description says nothing about providing affection."

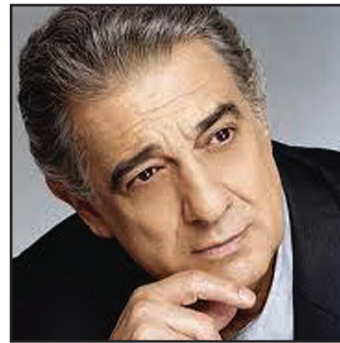
Hiring out a 'husband' from the Tbilisi-based company costs 17 dollars (13 euros) an hour, Mchedlishvili said.

Placido Domingo receives top Spanish arts award

MADRID, (AFP) — Spain's government awarded opera tenor Placido Domingo its Order of Arts and Letters for "his extraordinary artistic career."

Domingo, who is to perform in Madrid on his 70th birthday this month, is "one of the great ambassadors of Spain and of its culture in the world," the ministry of culture said in announcing the award.

The honour is "in recognition of his extraordinary artistic career as a singer and orchestra conductor, as well as for his international defence of Spanish music, in particular the zarzuela," the traditional Spanish operetta, it said.



"One of the great tenors in history," he has had "a 50-year career that is unparalleled in the history of modern music."

Domingo, well known to popular music audiences for his "Three Tenors" performances with Jose Carreras and the late Luciano Pavarotti, made his operatic debut in a

leading role as Alfredo in Verdi's "La Traviata" in Monterrey in Mexico nearly five decades ago.

The Grammy-winner's repertoire encompasses 130 stage roles -- a number unmatched by any other celebrated tenor in history.

The singer, who was born in Madrid but moved to Mexico as a child with his family, underwent surgery last March in the United States to remove a malignant cancer tumour in his colon.

On January 21, his 70th birthday, he is to perform the role of Oreste in Christoph Willibald Gluck's opera "Iphigenie en Tauride" at Madrid's Teatro Real opera house.

Oscar hopeful Colin Firth gets Hollywood star



LOS ANGELES (AFP) — British actor Colin Firth, who is tipped for Oscar glory for his latest movie the "The King's Speech," was honored with a star on Hollywood's Walk of

Fame.

The 50-year-old, who plays stuttering King George VI in the movie also expected to do well in this weekend's Golden Globes, referred to the movie as he posed next to his sidewalk star on Hollywood Boulevard.

"Sometimes one feels like that particular king in moments like these," he quipped to a small crowd gathered for the photocall.

"I am very happy with my little spot in Hollywood, which I will call my little corner of England, next to my partner Emma Thompson," he said, referring to his fellow British

actor whose star is nearby on the famous thoroughfare.

Both golden stars are located near the Pig n' Whistle British pub, a couple of blocks from the Kodak Theater, where the Academy Awards will be presented on February 27.

"The King's Speech" is nominated in seven categories, including Best Actor for Firth, in this Sunday's Golden Globe awards show, traditionally seen as a pointer towards Oscar glory.

Firth is widely seen as a favorite for Best Actor at the Oscars, nominations for which will be announced on January 25.

Michael Jackson scents set for launch

ICE, France (AFP) — Inspired by plants that grow at the late King of Pop's Neverland Ranch, "Jackson's Tribute" for men and "Jackson's Legend" for women, both eau de parfums, will be formally launched on March 7 in the United States.

Julian Rouas Paris, manufacturer of own-brand and private-label fragrances, formulated the scents in just a fortnight, under a partnership deal signed in California last month with the patriarch of the Jackson family.

"With Joe Jackson, we are 50-50 partners in world sales, television rights and advertising receipts," said chief executive Franck Rouas, adding that a part of the proceeds will go to charities favoured by Michael Jackson.

As he tells it, Rouas -- a one-time French tennis instructor to Hollywood stars -- was manning his company's stall at

a trade fair in Las Vegas when two young autograph hunters asked to borrow his pen.

The Jackson family was nearby, they said, so Rouas immediately gave him not only his pen, but also two samples of Versailles, one of his firm's own brands, with instructions for them to be given to Janet Jackson.

Following further negotiations, the musical clan settled on a fruity floral blend for women and a more musky version for men, said Joseph Rubino, 63, the master perfumer whose nose perfected both scents. Developing the scent -- which purports to capture the prevailing floral aroma at Neverland -- took just two weeks. "We did it very very quickly," said Rouas. "Usually it takes a year."

In Los Angeles, a spokesman for Michael Jackson's estate said the perfume venture was "a Joe Jackson

deal" in which it was not involved.

Pre-orders and expressions of interest have already come to Rouas from as far afield as Southeast Asia and southern Africa, and a dedicated website is to be launched in the coming days, the perfumer said.

scents -- "Mystique de Michael Jackson" and "Legende de Michael Jackson" -- were telemarketed in the United States in the early 1990s, featuring collectable bottles with hologram portraits of the star.

Another line of Michael Jackson signature perfumes, "Magic Beat", launched in 1986, was aimed at teenaged girls but failed to take off.

Rouas, 38, a native of Nice who has lived on the West Coast of the United States for 15 years, happened upon the perfume business in 1996 when he met industry professionals at a charity soiree in Monaco.

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Li upsets Clijsters to take Sydney title

SYDNEY (AFP) - China's Li Na upset two-time champion Kim Clijsters on Friday to win the Sydney International title and her fourth career WTA crown.

Eighth seed Li recovered from going behind 0-5 in the opening set to rally for a convincing 7-6 (7/3), 6-3 victory in 1hr 30min.

It was her second WTA title in Australia after winning the Gold Coast event in 2008 and last year she was a surprise semi-finalist at the Australian Open.

Li will stay at her 11th ranking despite the win, while Clijsters missed the chance to move up from number three to two in the rankings ahead of Russian Vera Zvonareva.

It was Li's second victory in six encounters with US



Open champion Clijsters and her first win over the Belgian in three matches at the Sydney tournament.

"Maybe right now I can say I am more confident on the court or I believe I can play much better," Li said.

"I have played here for many years and every time I

see the name of the past champions every year I think about when my name will be there.

"And when you to the centre court, you can see many pictures so next year I will see my picture there as well... yeah, it feels great."

Li, at 28 years 10 months, is the oldest woman to win the Sydney title in 21 years.

Clijsters, 27, who won in Sydney in 2003 and 2007, had been a perfect 13-0 in semi-final and final matches since her return to tennis in August 2009 as Li pulled off the boilover.

Li became the first Chinese player to break into the world top 10 rankings after reaching the last four at last year's Australian Open.

No progress on Beckham deal admits Redknapp

CHIGWELL, United Kingdom (AFP) - David Beckham won't face Manchester United on Sunday after Tottenham manager Harry Redknapp admitted his club's bid to sign the LA Galaxy star is still no closer to a successful conclusion.

Redknapp had hoped to bring former United midfielder Beckham back to the Premier League in a three-month loan deal and the 35-year-old has been training with Spurs since Monday.

But Tottenham have been unable to agree terms with the Galaxy as the MLS side want Beckham back in California earlier than Redknapp had anticipated.

Spurs are still keen to come to an agreement but Redknapp conceded on Friday that there is no progress at present, meaning Beckham

will not feature against his old club at White Hart Lane.

"I've no idea what's happening. We've only just got full permission that he can actually train with us. There's been a bit of an issue over that," Redknapp told reporters.

"He's been doing little bits but now he can join in with everything we do. That's as far as it has gone.

"I've not dealt with it at all. I've had no conversation with anybody at LA Galaxy. The club secretary is dealing with that. At the moment there's no progress on him playing."

Beckham was keen to join Tottenham to prove to England coach Fabio Capello that he is still good enough to play for the national team.

But, even if Tottenham do manage to sign him, Redknapp believes it will be sev-

eral weeks before the former England captain is fully fit.

"David is a fitness fanatic but getting ready for Premier League football is very different. He would be the first to admit that he has felt tired in training this week," Redknapp said.

"It will be a couple of weeks before he would be fit to play.

Power hitter Thome re-signs with Twins

MINNEAPOLIS (AFP) - Five-time all-star Jim Thome has re-signed with the Minnesota Twins as the top designated hitter with the Major League Baseball club.

The 40-year-old Thome signed a one-year deal that the American media reported is worth three-million dollars.

"It's great to be back," the 40-year-old slugger said Friday. "Minnesota's a wonderful place."

Thome hit 25 home runs and drove in 59 runs in 276 at-bats for Minnesota last season.

Last year, he also eclipsed Rafael Palmeiro, Harmon Killebrew, Mark McGwire and Frank Robinson for eighth place on the league's all-time home run list with 589.

He has played over 20 seasons with the Indians, Phillies, White Sox, Dodgers and Twins, hitting 20-or-more home runs in 16 of those.

UFC going to Madison Square Garden?



Dana White, UFC President, speaks during a press conference to announce commitment to bring UFC to Madison Square Garden and New York State at Madison Square Garden in New York City.

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Lock me up if I'm a Milan flop, says Cassano

ROME (AFP) - Controversial striker Antonio Cassano promised AC Milan on Friday that he would not betray the Italian giants, insisting that if he fails at the San Siro he deserves to be locked-up.

The former Real Madrid, Roma and Sampdoria star has already made his mark with Milan by coming off the bench on his debut last week and setting up the winner in a 1-0 victory over Cagliari.

Now the 28-year-old realises Milan will be his last chance to show his true talents.

"If I can't succeed here, then I am really only good for the mental asylum. After all the bullshit I have caused, this is my last chance not to betray those who have believed in me," he said.

"I am 100-percent certain that I will not make any more mistakes."

"There have been mistakes...but I don't regret anything. But now, I have to change. I want to win and here that is all that matters. Here the fines (for indiscipline) are really big."

Cassano also pledged to improve his work rate for Milan who went into this weekend's programme with a four-point lead at the top of Serie A.

"I have never been a big worker on my physical shape,

but when I see players like Nesta, Gattuso, Ibrahimovic, Seedorf, who have won a lot...it's mad the way they work, but why shouldn't I do the same.

"I am working like a dog, but I am happy."

Cassano joined Sampdoria from Real Madrid in 2007, but he was frozen out of the club after insulting president Riccardo Garrone during an argument in October.

Sampdoria had applied to have his contract unilaterally terminated for gross misconduct.

An Italian league arbitration board ruled that his salary should be cut by 50 percent, but that his contract could not be cancelled.

Cassano, who has also played for Roma, has 20 international caps and had looked set to become a first-choice player under Italy coach Cesare Prandelli.

Now he believes a settled time at Milan will help resurrect his international career.

"I want to thank Sampdoria from the bottom of my heart, but there had been a problem there. Now I am happy, really happy," he said.

"If I play well, I can return to the national side. I have a lot of respect for Prandelli. He comforted me during my difficult times and now I want my place back."

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Pats poised in face of Jets trash talk

FOXBORO, Massachusetts (AFP) – The New York Jets' rabble-rousing efforts didn't get a rise out of New England this week as the two teams prepared to face off in the second round of the NFL playoffs.

The Jets will be seeking a second straight road upset after eliminating American Football Conference (AFC) champions Indianapolis in the first round.

But they'll have a tough task to oust the Patriots, who enjoyed a first-round bye after a dominant end to the regular season.

The clash is one of two between bitter AFC division rivals this weekend. Pittsburgh host AFC North foes Baltimore on Saturday.

In National Football Conference (NFC) contests, Atlanta host Green Bay and Chicago host surprising Seattle.

While the Jets downed New England in the second week of the season, the Patriots thumped New York 45-3 in Foxboro in December.

Jets coach Rex Ryan said he'd make his players watch film from that defeat "every day" this week to remind them of the task they face.

Since falling at Cleveland on November 7, the Patriots have won eight straight games by an average of more than three touchdowns.

The key has been the stellar play of superstar quarterback Tom Brady, who finished the regular season with 36 touchdown passes and four interceptions -- the last coming against Baltimore in the sixth week.

Since then, Brady has thrown an NFL-record 335 consecutive passes with no interceptions.

Jets defender Antonio Cromartie made it clear, how-



ever, that New York won't be affording Brady too much respect.

Cromartie remained unapologetic after blasting Brady as arrogant in a much-publicized verbal attack this week.

"Why should I regret it? That's how I feel," he said.

Brady shrugged off the row with the same calm he shows in directing scoring drives.

"I've been called worse," he said. "I'm sure there's a long list of people who feel that way."

The Ravens-Steelers rivalry has long been defined by defense and Pittsburgh defender Chris Hoke predicted Saturday's game would be no exception.

"The team that wins this game is going to be the most violent team, the team that is

most physical," Hoke told the team's official website. "It's the team that goes out there to push the other team around."

But it's Pittsburgh quarterback Ben Roethlisberger who has swung the momentum the Steelers' way in recent times, guiding Pittsburgh to victory in their last six meetings with the Ravens.

Both teams finished the regular season 12-4. They split their two meetings - each team winning one game by the margin of one field goal on the other's home field.

Baltimore's victory came in week four, when Roethlisberger was still suspended for conduct issues.

Roethlisberger has won six straight against the Ravens, but admits it's always a tough contest.

"As a competitor, you love

Seattle, who squeaked into the postseason with the worst regular-season record of any playoff team in league history, made the most of their chance with an upset of Super Bowl champions New Orleans in the first round.

They'll be hoping for another upset against Chicago, a team the Seahawks beat in the regular season.

Green Bay's clash at Atlanta on Saturday showcases two young quarterbacks on the rise -- the Packers' Aaron Rodgers and Atlanta's Matt Ryan.

Third-year quarterback Ryan led the Falcons into their first home playoff game in six years, and will be seeking a first playoff victory.

In his first playoff game, two seasons ago, Atlanta fell at Arizona in the first round, but Ryan thinks things will be different at the Georgia Dome.

"I think the dome has been a tough place for teams to come in and play this year," Ryan said. "The atmosphere has been electric. I think specifically for us offensively, it's a benefit to be at home."

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Red Bulls thrilled to get Rooney junior

BALTIMORE, Maryland (AFP) – New York Red Bulls said they never expected John Rooney, the brother of Manchester United star Wayne, to still be available when it came time for them to pick in the second round of the Thursday's MLS entry draft.

Red Bulls head coach Hans Backe said they were surprised the younger brother of the England striker went unpicked through the first round because the Red Bulls had him rated as one of the top three midfielders in the



draft. "He's a box to box player, he has a good understanding

of the game and he's an excellent passer of the ball," Backe said of Rooney who spent most of his career in the English lower leagues. "I rated him very highly."

Rooney had featured for unheralded English third division side Macclesfield Town but now the 20-year-old attacker will play in America's MLS alongside French star Thierry Henry.

Rooney described himself Thursday as a "goal-scoring midfielder".

"I'm quick, I'm crafty and I can put the ball in the back of the net," Rooney said. "Hopefully I can do that for them."

He travelled to Baltimore Thursday with family members for the draft.

Rooney said he has never been to New York but is looking forward to showcasing his skills in the Big Apple for Red Bull fans.

The 2011 MLS season starts in March.

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